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Preston Bradley ..... Editor
Grace Thayer Bradley ..... Associate Editor

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## *"IS THE SOUL A MYTH?"*

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Some men express opinions and we pass them by as of no significance whatever because we know the man; we know that there is a lack of intellectual competency; we know there may be a defect of character; we know that there may be something which very vitally interferes with any great value of the opinion expressed. There are other men who when they express an opinion we listen; we listen because we know something of the intellectual magnitude of the mind that framed it; we listen because we know something of the character back of the mind that framed it, and, consequently, we when listening to their opinion feel ourselves that we are approximating something of definite value.

Mr. Clarence Darrow, one of our distinguished fellow-citizens, a man who has spent a lifetime in behalf of those who are unfortunate has recently expressed himself upon the problem of the soul. And so great is my respect for an opinion of Mr. Darrow's that I listened very carefully and intently to what he had to say. Mr. Darrow's philosophical attitude toward life is always commendable. The individual who is interested in a solution of our problems of life can always listen with advantage to an opinion by Mr. Darrow. He possesses one of the outstanding analytical minds in our modern life, and, at the same time, does he possess a mind which has been completely disillusioned and is no longer susceptible to opinions or ideas which are based upon inherited attitudes or the twin elements of superstition and fear. Whenever Mr. Darrow expresses an opinion about religion you are quite safe in affirming to yourself that though you may very heartily disagree and though you may consider him philosophically unsound and his opinion might run contrary to every idea which you might have in regard to religion, you must pay him the respect of the opinion coming from an honest mind. Whatever Mr. Darrow's opinions are, they are honest opinions; and because they are honest opinions they command the respect of all honest people, whether they agree with them or not.

The subject of my sermon this morning is not an apology or an interpretation of the philosophy of Mr. Darrow. Those of us who know him know that he is quite competent to speak for himself. But our discussion this morning primarily concerns itself with an opinion which has recently been expressed by Mr. Darrow in regard to this problem of the soul. Mr. Darrow makes the statement that to him the soul is a myth, it has no identity, it does not exist. and you cannot separate man into compartments, one of these compartments being the soul.

There is nothing unique about

this idea. Those who attempt to study the evolution of the ideology of the problem of the soul are quite aware that his opinion expressed an opinion which has been extant whenever man has thought about the soul. Tracing the etymology of the word itself back into its structural formation, into the life of human thought, we see that there is identified with it a sort of hazy, indefinite definition. Men have never been sure what they meant when they said the "soul" and man's ideas of the "soul" have undergone repeated evolvements and devolvements in the course of the development of the human intellect. The more the universe has been enlarged by the discovery of natural laws and the application of those laws to human life, the less definite has been man's statements of what constitutes the soul as some extraneous thing, separate and distinct from the thing we know and speak of as personality.

The problem of the soul has always been a problem and probably will continue to be a problem as long as life lasts. And because of the depth of this problem it is all the more necessary that those of us who express an opinion about the soul should evidence that those opinions are the result of a careful accumulation of what the world's best minds have thought, and then by making a digest of what the world's best and superior minds have thought allow it to percolate through our own personalities and see if we can find in that effort something which satisfies us as individuals as to what this soul is; as to whether it is, and the purpose for it, if it is. For in the end, like every other problem in religion, our opinion of the soul will be validated by our experience. As in the realm of science, which approaches every problem from a scientific point of view, the one thing which gives power to scientific investigation and gives a sense of accuracy to scientific results is a validity that has come from obeying certain necessary factors in the problem. The knowledge of law. What man can solve a problem in mathematics who has not a knowledge of the laws that govern mathematical accuracy? How much of a result would a man achieve in raising A plus B to the 12th power if he did not understand what was meant by raising A plus B to the second power? He must know the law which underlies the raising of an equation just as much to raise it to the second power as he does to raise it to the 12th power; and the accuracy of his result will depend not upon the number of the power to which the equation is raised, but it will depend upon his understanding of the law which is behind the problem itself.

So when we come to this problem of the soul we immediately find that the old values which were so much used by the theologians of antiquity when theology was known as the queen of the sciences, have been discarded by much of our modern thought and much of our modern science. And those values have been rightly discarded, for they were not permanent values and they did not possess the element of absolute accuracy.

The mind of man in its primitive formation spoke to its limit, but in a world which was prescientific, in a world which believed that the earth was the center of the solar system, in a world which believed the sun went around the earth, in a world which knew not the existence of the atom and had never heard of the circulation of the blood, in a world that had no awareness whatever of the tremendous scientific achievements that have come in the last decade and in the last century; that world, when it expressed an opinion about the soul would necessarily evidence a great influence that had been born of superstí-

ion and was the outgrowth of ear.

The enemy of all accuracy in eological thinking is superstiion, while the motivation of uch of the opinions of the theogy of the early time was the nspiration of fear. The mind of an gained man an enlarged universe. The stars did not hang n yonder sky upon silver threads, here for the esthetic enjoyment f man, as the earlier poets of stronomy sang; they are a part f a great cosmic process. Science as affirmed that. The universe hich man knew when he formerly was influenced by his theological teachings is a universe that is ompletely annihilated by the onard and progressive march of uman achievements; because hat is true, religion of necessity ad to adjust itself to this onward rogressive enlightenment. It was mpossible for religion to stand till; as chemistry did not stand till, as botany did not stand still, s all of the other means for the xpansion of the human intellect emain in a continual state of uctuation and lucidity, so religin was amenable to that same law f progress, with the result that he most unkindly thing that can e said about religion is that relition is something which in the ar off centuries, whether it was ineteen centuries ago or one undred thousand centuries ago s of little importance, the most nkind thing which can be said bout religion is that there back onder in the kindergarten age of he human struggle religion was nfolded to the intellect, and upn that unfoldment the curtain ver the drama of religion was rawn, and that nothing has been dded to it or taken from this revealing of religious truth that as given in a prehistoric age. hat is the most unkind characerization that can be given to religion, and does not command the espect of any thinking individual. The fact that religion can be nfluenced, as it has been influenced by the enlarged conception of the universe is evidence of the fact that if we persist in our inquiry, we will come nearer and nearer all the time to the great throb of reality, by pushing aside the mists that hang and obscure our vision, by eliminating superstitions that are the inheritance of a gullible era in human life, by feeling that they are gods somewhere that have to be appeased and by appeasing those gods either through sacrifices or adoration we will be more kindly treated in the world in which we live; by eliminating all of the accumulations that have come out of ignorance and superstition the reality of God unfolds itself with all the more clarity and the reality of religion becomes all the deeper in its abiding qualities.

Francis Bacon, the great scholar of a great age, said this most significant thing when he was discussing some of these problems of philosophy: That a little learning, a little philosophy always tends toward the atheistic conclusion, while a deep penetration of the philosophy of life always tends toward a splendid conception of the values of religion.

Now, there are two ways in which we must treat this question: "Is the soul a myth?" Obviously, if I am to appeal to a type of mind that is interested in this problem from the point of view of philosophy and of psychology and of inheritance, then it must be a question of definition.

Much of the argument of the world is based on the lack of an actual understanding as to what we mean when we use words.

And after I carefully read Mr. Darrow's article on the "myth of the soul" I am not so sure but what Mr. Darrow and I would occupy almost a similar position, if we could have an understanding as to what we mean when we use the word "soul."

Now, this question of definition is a difficult one. It is not easy, if there are other words associated with the word "soul" that make

it difficult. You remember Paul, who was more a theologian than he was a philosopher; although the better a theologian a man is, the more authentic is his opinion if it shows a philosophical procedure. But not all theologians are philosophers, and not all philosophers are theologians. But the principles of reason and of logic, which apply both to philosophy and to theology, certainly ought to be used in this discussion. You remember Paul, who was primarily a theologian, although he is frequently spoken of as a philosopher, used the trinity, body, soul, spirit. And immediately, we have no difficulty with the word "body." We are all of us quite familiar what we mean when we say "body," but when we say "soul" and when we say "spirit," then there begins a conflict.

What is the difference between the soul and the spirit? Are we certain of possessing soul when we might possess spirit? Is it possible for an individual to possess a soul and not possess a spirit? Is is possible for a body, soul and spirit to fail to work in triune harmony and thus bring chaos and despair to the individual?

What is this thing that we call soul? And what do we mean when we say spirit?

Now, fortunately a great many of our contemporary minds—and the very nature of the problem this morning inspires one to somewhat of an academic discussion,— we are fortunate in living in a period when some of the most finely trained minds and some of the most careful analysts have spoken in regard to this subject with unimpeachable authority. There has been published a book which I would advise every individual to read, a book called "Is Religion Coming of Age," written by Professor Sellars of the University of Michigan. He also wrote another book some years ago, which, when it was first brought to my attention worked a complete reformation in my intellectual attitude toward religion. That was a book called "Evolutionary Naturalism." Mr. Bertrand Russell, you remember, last year stood in this pulpit and gave that remarkable analysis of some of the problems of religion. And probably the most penetrating mind that is thinking today upon some of these questions is the mind of Bertrand Russell. You are all aware, who know Bertrand Russell, what his preaching is. It is not esthetic preaching. Mr. Bertrand Russell's preaching is the preaching of the skeptic. Mr. Russell makes this assertion. He says that there is no reason why anyone should believe anything that on the face of it appears to be true There is no reason why anyone should believe anything that merely upon the face of it appears to be true.

Now, that is a somewhat artful manner of re-stating the attitude of the skeptic.

When people ask me about my philosophy in religion I say to them a paradox. Like every other paradox, it appears to be untrue; untrue unless you analyze it. I place myself in religion as a pragmatic mystic. The only characterization which I am satisfied to apply to myself or call myself is that of a pragmatic mystic. And those of you who are aware of Professor James' "Varieties of Religious Experience"—and that is a book too that you ought to be reading these days; and who are aware of Professor James' Philosophy of Pragmatism, will know exactly what I mean, if you are likewise familiar with some of the works of Pascal and many of the rest. You will find there when I use the words "pragmatic mystic," while it may be paradoxical on first flash, underneath it all is a philosophical attitude that I think even Mr. Russell or Mr. Darrow could not deny. But we have a great school of modern thinkers who have repudiated any value or any conception of that which we call supernatural. Now, of course, we

are in the definitions again. What do we mean by supernatural? Well, the super is from the Latin which simply means above; something that is above nature. Anything that defies our own intellectual investigation we speak of as supernatural. Now most of our modern philosophers, a great many of them, are evolutionary naturalists; they see nothing beyond nature. Instead of making any emphasis whatever upon values of man, for instance, that are designated by the word soul, to them the entire achievement of man is entirely human based upon his human capacity, his human potentiality, and what he is able to do with himself. So much so, they weed entirely out of their philosophy any concept at all that we mean at any time, or that I mean when I use the word God. The word God is not in their vocabulary. I do not mean in the sense that they are the old time atheists. The old time atheist is passed. You know the type of man whose whole attack was upon the Bible or upon the mistakes of Moses. Who cares anything about the mistakes of Moses. We have so many mistakes of our own to look after that we are not worried about the mistakes of Moses. The old problems of the old time atheist simply do not exist to the superior minds of our present day. The people who are fighting those problems are people who lack an intellectual grasp on the greater problems involved. This problem of evolutionary naturalism is a real problem, and its relationship to religious truth is a real relationship, and when these people refuse to use the word God it is not merely because they are atheists—they are not atheists—they do not deny.

Now, the men who are working and thinking today about the problems of nature and of life have brought to us a renaissance of humanism.

Please distinguish here, you students and scholars and university folks, — please distinguish here, that the present day humanism is not related to the humanism of the thirteenth and twelfth century philosophers which came as a renaissance of the classical languages of Europe. The humanism of that period is not the humanism of today. The humanism of that period was the humanism which had its re-birth in the classics.

The humanism of today is humanism which is based upon a detection of values in man as man that are not dependent upon supernatural relationships; and that man as man does possess certain potentialities and certain abilities which, if he would understand the laws that govern himself he would be able to go thru life purely and simply under his own management. Modern humanism admits of no external influence over the destiny of the individual. It is all determined by a sense of human values. Now, all this, ladies and gentlemen, I am frank to say to you, impresses one as trying to lift themselves up by their own boot-straps. There is no one that recognizes any more than I do the potentiality of the human being; there is no one that recognizes more than I do the great power that we possess as humans, and there is not anyone that has more a sense of the dignity and the worth of human nature; the divine quality of humanity exists to me as a very great reality. But what place is there in this philosophy for the soul? And here is where Mr. Darrow steps in and tells us along with Mr. Russell and along with these other gentlemen that the soul itself is but a myth.

Would you believe that we have some preachers today in some of our pulpits—and they are mighty fine men and they are doing a mighty fine work—who no longer have any prayer at all in the church; who no longer use the word **God** at all; who no longer in their ministry feel dependent upon anything that does not speak to them of human character?

But now then for the last few

moments in the light of this philosophy of evolutionary naturalism, what about the soul? Let us admit that all, everything, has a beginning and an end. Out of the dark, into the dark. Twenty, fifty, sixty, seventy, eighty, ninety, one hundred years of space, time, consciousness. Out of an unknown, into an unknown. And that all we have, we have now.

There are just two ways to look at this problem. The first is the monotheistic approach; the next is the dualistic approach. But our modern thought says **mind, spirit, soul, body** are all one; man is an identity. That as long as his brain is being properly nourished by blood and his heart is properly functioning and he obeys the laws of physical continuity, then he has mind and he has soul and he has spirit, but when the brain ceases to function then the mind is no more. When the body ceases to function in unity and dissolution, which we call death, takes place, then the soul is no more. In other words, there is no mind and there is no soul without an organism functioning to be the medium by which these are determined.

So, consequently, when you look, as I look almost every day of my life, into the face of someone who has passed on, and I stand by their side to speak words to a broken and a grieved family, I am to feel that the brain has ceased to function and therefore the mind and the body are dead —and therefore the soul. Their immortality is not an immortality based upon a continuity of personality. They live like autumn leaves live, fall to the earth to enter again into the soil, washed by the rain, warmed by the sun, until the next springtime they go back again into the trees and bloom again in that springtime as a new leaf, but with no relationship and no continuity to the leaf that fell at the mercy of the autumn blasts upon the ground in the previous autumn.

There are those who can look at death like that; who can think of the soul as non-existent when the body dies. They are monotheists; their philosophy is the philosophy of the monotheistic, who can see no reason for immortality.

Then there is the dualistic vision. And here rests the conclusion of my argument. The dualistic attitude is that the body is but the medium through which that real self interprets acts, lives, in its pilgrimage of the cosmic. This suggests problems. When is the soul born? At birth? When does the soul enter the body? At conception? If the soul does not enter at conception can any disturbance of the life processes be treated as a crime, if you kill that which is unperceived and unknown? Have you killed that which has no relationship with reality? When does the soul arrive at the age of accountability? When the individual is able to distinguish between good and bad? Is that a part of the soul? These are all problems that cannot be solved; they can only be intimated, and much of the solution must rest upon the validity of your own experience and upon the domination of your conscience, But there are certain aspects of the problem that can be solved.

What is the soul ?

May I give you my definition?

Mr. Darrow gives that old argument that is so thread bare and time-worn, of the surgeon who takes a body into a room and dissects it, and of the brain specialist who saw through the skull and lifts out the brain and puts it all under the microscope and then comes out of the laboratory and says "I find no place for the soul. I find no evidence of the soul." As though the soul was a sort of mystic, spooky, indefinite thing that when you die floated off like a zephyr, and was that sort of identity. That is perfectly ridiculous. To just be a zephyr off somewhere is of no significance

to you or to me, nor will it ever, unless conscious identity is possessed survive in value. It would be far better to have death endless sleep. Far better.

What is the soul?

Why, the soul is to me the entire ensemble of the individual. It is the glisten in the eye. It is the cultivation of that thing which we speak of when they say "Hasn't he a lovely soul?" What do you mean when you say that? And again we say "But those acts of his evidence that he has a fine soul." Or "One looking into those eyes can see the sovereignty of a beautiful soul." What do you mean when you say that? You mean that everything the individual is, his composite fabric that he creates for himself, and may not necessarily and definitely offer something from some extraneous force. We build our soul. We make them, just as we re-build our bodies from sickness and despair. The earth was not made. It grew. Man was not given a living soul. Man is a living soul. It is not something that he has commanded. It is something that he achieves.

You know and I know that the physical sciences affirm that the star dust, quivering star dust, was the beginning of the structure which we call the planets. Star dust. So, back of all life is the star dust of the soul. And out of the star dust of the cosmos, by loftiness of mind, by sublimity of heart, we build the citadel of the soul, and it has the quality of eternity; it becomes a part of the cosmic march of the stars. And you can no more die than you can re-create life out of death.

So when people say to me "Well, Dr. Bradley, that is a new idea."—I don't know if it is or not. I don't even know where it came from. I repudiate all the old theology. God is not anthropomorphic to me. But I know that there sweeps and surges in my soul at times a kinship with the stars, a friendship with unseen seas, a pilgrimage on the banks of the ocean of infinity. I know that I feel the sweeping and surging of eternal reality. And when the material, mechanistic skeptic, though their intellectuality is brilliant and unimpeachable, and though they say to me "But you are a humanist," and I say "Yes, I love humanity, but I am a humanist plus." It is always to me Man and the universe; man and the stars. Were it not so, flowers would mock us; were it not so, sunset would laugh at us; were it not so, poets would wither and die; the mind of Plato, the poetry of Horace and Dante, the drama of Shakespeare; the soul of the race is older and will live longer than the stars. You are not going into eternity; you are in eternity now.

And the only thing that this birth and this death does in the development and evolution of the soul from the unknown there to the unknown there is just simply to give you this much of space-time consciousness. And who dare say what the rest will do? Who dare say you are dead.

May I conclude with this tribute. My father is in the audience this morning, and he knows whereof I speak now. And this tribute seems to me to be a great verification for the adventure of faith. The same power that took care of me in the helplessness of my birth, when I knew nothing, could do nothing of myself to live; I have no memory of those first months and years. It was the loving heart of my Mother that gave me to the world, and from her breast I drew those months the warm rich blood of her soul. It was love that kept me when I knew nothing, and but for loving hands I would have died, knowing nothing. And when that other extreme comes, and the black night and the cold sweat and all ceases, and then in a moment I know nothing again. The same power that held me at birth will hold me at death, for it is one world, one heart, one love. And life is an adventure triumphant toward the excellency of nature and toward the heart of God.

# *"BUTTONHOLES AND CHRISTMAS"*

**Dedicated to the Children of The Peoples Church Sunday School**

**By—Grace Thayer Bradley**

"No mam, we can't promise any buttonholes done before Christmas, we got as much work as we can get out; seems if everybody's wanting no end of pleating and hemstitching done the last minute before Christmas." The young girl behind the small showcase in the pleating shop chewed her gum complacently and smoothed the back of her "boyish bob".

"Oh dear! I'm so disappointed! I've taken so much trouble to make this little Oliver Twist suit for my small boy, and I want him to have it to wear for the holidays," said young Mrs. Davis, puckering her pretty lips, and fingering the little blue suit she had opened on the showcase before the shopgirl; and then she asked "You don't happen to know of a place in the neighborhood where I could get them done, do you?"

The girl snapped the gum in her mouth and rolled her eyes to the sooty corner of the ceiling then back to the anxious customer before her.

"There was a woman a couple of blocks down, over the Snow White Laundry, she did buttonholes for us once in a while some time ago, not much call for 'em nowdays. Maybe she's moved,—but you can go see. Think her name was Nelson."

Eleanor Davis thanked the girl, folded the little suit in its wrapping paper and hastened out of the shop.

Two blocks up the street she came to the Snow White Laundry, but the stairway leading to the upper stories was so narrow and dark she hesitated about going up. A vision of how darling Junior would look in the new blue suit, and of how quite altogether shabby his old brown one would be for holiday wear, gave courage and determination to her faltering steps. Hugging the package under her arm, and trying not to breathe the foul air of the stairway she reached the top and knocked at the first door she could see in the dark passage.

A stout woman with an asthmatic wheeze opened the door a few inches and peered out over her spectacles—"No she wa'n't Mrs. Nelson, —Mrs. Nelson's in th' back flat at th' end of th' hall." Eleanor looked down the long dark hall,—her inclination was to run down the stairs as fast as she could to the street, and fill her lungs with fresh air that was not heavy with the odour of clothes boiling in cheap soap, and steam from a second class laundry, and cabbage cooking somewhere near, and strong tobacco from the pipe of a male lodger in the flat of the stout lady, whose door was still held open far enough to allow half her head to peak out at Eleanor's retreating steps. Had it not been for those eyes watching her Eleanor knew she would have rushed down the stairs—but how could she act as tho' she were frightened—she the wife of a soldier—and what was there to be afraid of just because the hall was dark and very narrow? Her step became sharp and quick, stopping before the last door she rapped rather loudly, and almost immediately the door was opened by a small woman with a low voice. "Yes"—she said as she held the door wide open, she was Mrs. Nelson and she did buttonholes.

Eleanor entered the room, it was the kitchen, and unmistakably the aroma of cabbage had come from here, as a large kettle was boiling noisily on the stove. The room was clean. There was a square table covered with mottled

oilcloth, and several wooden chairs. A sewing machine was in front of the only window and an oil lamp with a white shade stood on it. When Eleanor entered a little black dog ran in from the next room barking sharply, but ceased when Eleanor leaned over and patted him, saying in a friendly voice, "Little fellow, you are only saying hello—aren't you? You know who likes dogs and who does not!" He sniffed at her coat and whined and pranced and whirled around carrying on conversation in his doggy way.

A door opened in a small passage leading from the kitchen and a masculine voice inquired "That you Ben?" "No—'Taint Ben, it's a lady for buttonholes." answered the little woman. Now Eleanor looked at her, the dog having taken her attention before. She was very small and thin, and extremely pale; there was a little nervous twitching of the mouth and her face would have seemed expressionless had it not been for deep dark eyes which held a look of suffering,—suffering not from any physical cause, but from crushing disappointments, from sorrow and longing, and hardships, and poverty and dead hopes. She had a piece of sewing in her hands which she tossed upon the table as Eleanor handed her the little suit and was showing her where she wanted buttonholes made. The dog scampered out of the kitchen and back again enjoying the excitement of company. "Come here Snuff, come in here to me!" called a high pitched childish voice. "Oh—he is your little girl's play fellow?" questioned Eleanor pleasantly. Her mother always said any stranger would tell Eleanor their life's history with but one word from her, she had the sort of smile and eyes which invited it!

"Go on—you,—to Norma!" shooing the dog, then the woman turned to Eleanor and her words were like low stoccatto notes, "no —oh no,—she's not mine—least she's all we've got—but she aint ours. I lost my little girl with the "Eastland" thirteen years ago." "Oh—I'm so sorry I asked"—Eleanor put forth her hand sympathetically and touched the cold fingers of the older woman who was so surprised that she looked up quickly into the lovely face of her visitor and saw there such sympathy and understanding as she had never met with before. "She in there" said the little woman, indicating with a quick gesture of her thumb over her shoulder, "is a little crippled girl. Her father and my husband Steve were to war together. Steve come home after he was hurt; and Mac came when the war was over, bringin' the French girl he'd married the first year he was over, and their baby, Norma in there" again indicating with her thumb the room back of her. "Norma's a queer name, aint it? I never hear it before,—maybe it's French. Jeanne, her ma, looked half starved, but she was as white an' pretty as a Saint's picture. She didn't last long after they come to America—I don't believe it was quite a year. Never see a man sorrow like Mac. He an' Jeanne were that daft over each other an' over their baby. When the funeral was over Mac and the baby came home with Steve an' me, and we told him they could stay here.—Mac was a good worker an' he paid me awful well.—But there was somethin' wrong with the baby's legs, when she was plenty old enough to walk she couldn't stand up. Mac used to sit with her in his arms hours at a time just a lookin' out the window at the brick wall like he could see clean through it,—and often I seen tears dripping down his cheeks like rain.—He made Norma little crutches when she was five years old and he learned her to walk on 'em." "Where is he now?" huskily inquired Eleanor clearing her throat. She had been deeply affected by the tragedy and pathos of the story told in the simple words of the dark eyed

little woman leaning slightly against the table before her.

Uninvited Eleanor had sat down on one of the wooden chairs. "He died two years ago come New Year's," Mrs. Nelson pitched her voice even lower than before, bit a thread she had been twisting between her thumb and finger while she talked, sighed deeply, then she continued:

"You see Mac had been gassed three times, and he had been hurted too; he had a couple of bullets in him. He come home one night an' had a chill an' I fixed him hot tea but he couldn't get warm. The next day Mac was so bad Steve got the Doctor from over the corner drug store to come in, an' he said Mac had pneumonia an' must go to the hospital right off, he said he'd take him there his self, then he went out an' said he'd be right back. Steve went in to tell Mac what was goin' to happen, and Mac took hold of Steve's hand and he sez "Steve I'm goin' West—you're my Buddie—will you take care of little Norma? She's all I got-to-leave-you-Steve"—I was standin' in the door an' I begin to cry—so I put my apron over my head an' come into the kitchen. There was that little angel Norma sittin' in th' old black rocking chair—it's the only one she's comfortable in—lookin' at one of the books Margaret give her.—Margaret is the butcher's oldest girl, an' she comes most every day to learn Norma school lessons, she says she gets Scout credits for it—I don't just know what she means by that—but it's somethin' they have at her school.—Anyway when I seen the child sittin' there I choked my tears, an' th' idea come over me she'd most die if she saw her Daddie carried out of here; so I called Steve to the hall an' I told him to carry Norma over to the butcher's flat across th' street to see Margaret's new baby sister, and he could 'splain to them about keeping her an hour or so.—When Steve fetched her back later she was all smiling and pretty color in her cheeks. She wanted to tell her Daddie about the baby she saw an' everything. And when she found he wasn't here—honest Miss it would break your heart to see her face, but she never whimpered—no—she never does. Mac died th' next day and his Post buried him of course. An awful nice funeral it was too.—But it was hard to 'splain to Norma, she couldn't understand his going away like that an' never comin' back. Sometimes I think she's still lookin' for him. The poor lamb!—I think it'll be better for her when we move upstairs, 'cause all she can see from these windows is brick wall of th' next building. We're movin' Sunday, we aint got much of course, an' Hank the driver of th' laundry wagon down stairs, is goin' to help Steve."

Mrs. Nelson bit another piece of thread and would have started again with her narrative, but Eleanor interrupted with the question "May I see the little girl—and then could you take me up to see the flat you are going into?" Eleanor's thoughts had worked fast and furious; even while she asked the question she had seen in her minds eye the completed plan of what she was about to do. "Yes—sure Miss," replied the other woman turning toward the narrow passage way—it was only a few steps to the door of a small room almost as dark as night in the December afternoon, with the one window not two feet from a brick wall.

The women paused in the doorway. The little dog lifted one ear, and opened one bright eye at the approaching footsteps, he was curled up like a little round ball in Norma's lap, while she had fallen asleep in the black rocking chair, her frail little body drooped sideways till her shoulder and head rested on the arm of the chair; her crutches lay on the floor beside her. The women turned quietly back to the kitchen. "Now," said Eleanor in a hushed

voice, "shall we go up to the other flat?" "I guess so—if you want to" replied the little woman with an expression of wonder that her caller should desire to see the rooms upstairs. "The Murpheys moved out first of th' week an' left me th' key." While Mrs. Nelson looked for it in the table drawer Eleanor explained that the Woman's Club of her church often had pieces of furniture and things they were glad to give away and that she would like to fix up Norma's room in the "new" flat if Mrs. Nelson would allow her that pleasure. Whereupon Mrs. Nelson showed more real emotion than at any time during her talk that afternoon, sad tho' the details had been.—She sank down on to a kitchen chair as tho her legs wouldn't hold her, her thin face wrinkled oddly, not knowing whether to cry or smile, —her small bony hand clutching Eleanor's arm while she said "oh! —Miss—oh! Miss can you do that for her—she is th' sweetest lamb —I'll wake her so's you can see for yourself"—Eleanor restrained her as she arose quickly from her chair. "No—do not awaken the child. Let us go up stairs while she is asleep." Mrs. Nelson led the way up the narrow stairs and along the dark hall. Inside the flat the rooms seemed very bright by comparison. All the windows looking over the roof of the next building, faced south. "How nice!" exclaimed Eleanor as excited as tho she were going to rent it herself; "the sun will shine in here." The front room was for Steve's sewing—machines and his work, and their bed would be in the small alcove; her husband was going to put up a partition of some nice boards the laundry man down stairs said he might have, Mrs. Nelson told Eleanor. "What is your husband's work?" inquired Eleanor as they went from the front rooms back to the kitchen, and Eleanor stopped again in the door of the little room that was to be Norma's, calculating the length of the windows, the size of the floor, just where the bed should be placed, and she did hope the blue rag rugs that had been sent for the rummage sale would not be too long.—Mrs. Nelson was saying— "I couldn't keep the shop going while Steve was away to war, an' th' second year we lost it. He's never been well enough to start up again so he does finishing work for tailors here at home.— Ben, the old man that used to work for us long ago, he goes and gets th' things for Steve. Steve's foot got hurted in th' war you see an' he's pretty lame.

"Ben's goin' to help me scrub and clean up this here place tonight, and I'm agoin' to wash th' windows too!" Mrs. Nelson finished with a tone of pride. "I must go now, Mrs. Nelson, I will be here day after tomorrow—Saturday —with everything for Norma's room.—You move up on Sunday but could you plan to keep your beds down in the old flat and sleep there Sunday night, it will be Christmas Eve you know,— then come up here Christmas morning with Norma, and do not let her come at all until then,— will you do that?" earnestly asked Eleanor.—"Yes Miss,—you're so good,—I never seen anyone so good before! And I'll have the buttonholes done when you come Saturday!" answered the older woman brokenly, as she shut the door, and they went down stairs.

Eleanor hurried away anxious to carry out the plans which were unfolding in her fertile imagination. When she entered her own cozy apartment she thought it had never looked so lovely before! The furnishings were unpretentious, most every woman of her acquaintance had finer,—but— it was "homey", and—after all there were many pretty things, she realized as she glanced around while she switched on the lights,— and how charming the lamplight was, —she had made the shades herself.—For the first time Eleanor was glad that her husband would not be home till Saturday night.

Dear little Auntie staying with them over the holidays would look after Junior, while she devoted the next two days to the Nelsons! Auntie had taken Junior to his kindergarten party that afternoon, and they would be coming in soon all rosy and sparkling with fun. Eleanor's eyes grew moist as the picture of little crippled Norma asleep in the rocking chair in the dark room came before her mind's vision.

In a few minutes she was telling the story of the Nelson's over the phone to Mrs. Walters, President of the Woman's Club of her Church. Before the receiver was hung up Mrs. Walters had promised not only the rugs and the little table which had been sent in for the rummage sale, but also an old fashioned washstand with drawers, that was in her own storeroom. Mr. Walters would be glad to get it out and paint it that very evening she said; and she would ring up the chairman of the Philanthropic Department of the Club and ask for the blue quilt and some blankets which had been donated only a few days ago. It was past midnight when Eleanor went wearily to bed,—so many plans dancing in her brain she could not sleep. —Miss Buckly, the landlady on the first floor had been so kind. Not only had she said to take the little iron bed which she had already promised the rummage sale, but had added some chairs and a bridge lamp which the family from the third floor had left in the basement when they moved. Eleanor had scarcely touched her dinner that evening, so anxious was she to get down to the basement to paint the bed and chairs, and clean the parchment lampshade which had blue birds and butterflies as decoration. She told Miss Buckly she felt like Alice in Wonderland, with all doors opening before her, and every wish granted.

"Isn't it really s w e e t!" exclaimed Eleanor with emphasis on the last word, as she took off her cover-all apron and folded it up.—Mrs. Randle, a young widow in the Church had worked with her for two days, and now late on Saturday evening they stood in the doorway of Norma's room to take a last look at it before they left.—Around the walls at a wainscoting height was a broad paper frieze of children at play in the sand.—In one corner stood the washstand with drawers, painted ivory to match the bed, above it a shelf filled with books that Norma could reach. —Behind the door a cretonne curtain hung from a shelf, covered several little dresses on hangers; and the same bright patterned cretonne covered soft cushions in the low wicker chair near the window.— Beside the chair stood a little table, and on the other side the floor lamp. "That bed looks so comfy I'd like to creep into it myself I'm so tired! said Mrs. Randle stepping into the room and turning down the sheet over the blue quilt a little more, and patting the snowy pillow slip.—Then Eleanor went over to the window and rearranged the "hold-backs" to the crisp yellow gingham curtains, saying,—"I'm sorry the poor child will only have a graveled roof to look at out this window, but she will get sunshine, and I am going to bring her one of my window-boxes of geraniums when we come Christmas morning with the Christmas basket from the Church." They went out through the kitchen, and Mrs. Randle laughed softly as she remarked "I believe this green linoleum is the most sensible Christmas present I ever gave in my life."—"And those white curtains with the cunning green ruffles.— Won't Mrs. Nelson love her kitchen! You're such a dear!" Eleanor gave the young widow a hug as they turned out the light and locked the door behind them.

"Merry Christmas!" Eleanor and Mrs. Randle said in unison as Mrs. Nelson opened the kitchen door on the "new flat."—"We're just coming from Church and we

dropped in to bring you—"—"A small grocery" finished Mr. Davis, almost staggering under the weight of the huge basket he was carrying, and another young man followed with the window-box of geraniums.

Mrs. Nelson tried to speak but words and voice failed her, and tears took their place.—"There now—don't cry" and Eleanor patted the shoulder of the little woman.

"Will you go down and get your husband and Norma so we can wish them a Merry Christmas, and then we will go." Mrs. Nelson hurried out and down the stairs as tho' a fire alarm had sounded. Presently she was back with Steve and frail little Norma hobbling on her crutches. Her white little face wore a puzzled expression and her large dark eyes were filled with wonderment as they spied the many packages on the table and the overflowing basket. Looking up at Steve she questioned in low voice "Santa Claus?"—"I guess" he replied, too affected himself to say more. Snuff—the small dog, had been sniffing the shoes of each person and then giving a sharp bark while he passed to the next stranger; having gone the rounds he scampered into Norma's room. A silence had come over the group after the first greetings had been exchanged, and Eleanor relieved the momentary embarrassment by saying "Let's go see what Snuff is up to;"—Norma went remarkably quick on her crutches, Eleanor and Mrs. Randle were close behind her, the others followed, and all stood in the passageway eager to have a glimpse of her surprise.

She stood an instant almost rigid, looking at Snuff who was sitting close to the doll at the foot of the bed, licking her face! Norma's gaze was drawn to the window where the winter sunlight was streaming in upon the red geraniums.—When she reached the window she looked at the flowers, and then—out across the graveled roof—"Oh—h!"—she said almost awed and again—"Oh—hh!" louder—"God's been here instead of Santa Claus!—See!" the little hand trembled as she pointed beyond the roof—"I only asked Santa Claus for flowers and a doll—but for oh so many nights, ever since last summer—I've prayed God to bring me a piece of blue sky—and—there it is—a really—truly blue sky!"

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## REGULAR EVENTS

**School of Religious Education** Sundays, 9:30 a. m., Channing Hall.
**Woman's Club**—Every Monday.
**Men's Forum**—Second Monday evenings, Channing Hall.
**Young People's Club**—1st and 3rd Tuesday evenings in Channing Hall.
**Church Trustees Meeting**—Second Monday evenings.

## THE UPTOWN PLAYERS

The Pageant scheduled for December was necessarily given up. So many people were ill and many others had their working hours lengthened during the holidays so that it was impossible to get together such an enormous cast for sufficient rehearsals. Therefore "The Dust of the Road" Kenneth Sawyer Goodman's beautiful Christmas one act play was given as a part of the Candle Light Service in the Church Sunday evening Dec. 23rd.

On the 16th and 17th of Jan. the Players will present Anita Loos and John Emerson's "The Whole Town's Talking"; preceded by a curtain raiser—"The Unseen" fresh from the pen of Alice Gerstenberg. After several local engagements which will whip this one act play into fine running, it is expected to be given a country-wide tour. The Uptown Players are surely making a name for themselves, and one to be proud of!

The Players are an integral part of the Church. Last year they pledged and paid $1,000, increasing the pledge for the current year to $1,500.

Loyalty begets loyalty! Let us not fail to support them in all their work!

## THE WOMAN'S CLUB

How gloriously—joyfully—woefully busy the month of December is! Donation Tea, Bazaar, Christmas Party, Christmas Baskets, Candlelight Service, Christmas Morning Service, Holidays. Well—I think we will all need a holiday when it is all over! The "Donation Tea" held Dec. 3 in Preston Bradley Hall, was a delightful affair. People came and went all afternoon, lingering for a while in the softly lighted room with its homey atmosphere, chatting over tea and cakes served from a pretty candle lighted tea table; the buzz of conversation ceasing for the musical numbers given at intervals by Mme. Joan Younge, Miss Ruth Halavity and Mr. Jas. Griffin. All of these artists were very much appreciated and were given enthusiastic applause. Every one who came brought a donation for the bazaar. Many beautiful as well as practical things were received. Our Radio friends were very generous and kind, and the Woman's Club deeply appreciates the interest and support they have received from the "Radio family." Bad weather both days of the Bazaar kept some people home; at no time was there a large crowd. The booths were filled with lovely things. Channing Hall was gay and beautiful. Splendid dinners were served both nights and the tables were filled twice over. Too much cannot be said in praise of Mrs. Geo. Schulten, Chairman of the Bazaar and her helpers, who worked indefatigably to make the affair a success. It was all splendid! The Christmas party of the Club to members only was held on Dec. 17, there being no further meetings until January. The members gathered around the gorgeous Christmas Tree in Channing Hall, singing songs and receiving their twenty-five cent gifts with as much glee as children given toys from Santa Claus, Miss Gladys Ulher in Santa Claus costume bringing in the gift pack on her back. In the Educational Department two splendid programs were given in December. "The Development of the Short Story" was discussed after reading papers on that subject, with Mrs. R. A. Pellage as chairman. The "American Home" day with Mrs. R. E. Eddy as chairman proved of exceptional interest. On this occasion Mrs. A. Peterson of the Chicago Gas Light staff of Home Economics addressed the Club. Some very fine programs are planned for January.

G. T. B.

## CHURCH NEWS

Dr. Bradley kept the following engagements during the month of November:

Nov. 2, State Teacher's Convention, Joliet, Ill.

Nov. 4, Morning, Sermon, Peoples Church.

Nov. 4, Evening, Glencoe Sunday Evening Club.

Nov. 5, Luncheon, Chicago Crime Commission.

Nov. 5, Meeting, Chicago Literary Club.

Nov. 5, Faculty Meeting, Church School.

Nov. 6, Chicago Real Estate Board Address.

Nov. 7, Cook County Real Estate Board Address.

Nov. 8, Mark Twain Dinner, Elkhart, Ind.

Nov. 11, Morning Sermon, Peoples Church.

Nov. 11, Evening, Armistice Address, Maywood.

Nov. 12, Address Wrangler's Club, Congregational Ministers.

Nov. 12, Chicago Public Library Board Meeting.

Nov. 12, Board of Trustees Meeting, Peoples Church.

Nov. 15, Banquet Agriculture Society, Muncie, Ind.

Nov. 16, Address City M. E. Church, Gary, Ind.

Nov. 18, Morning sermon Peoples Church.

Nov. 18, Evening World Unity Congress.

Nov. 19, Layman's League, Peoples Church.

Nov. 20, Address Armory, Akron, Ohio.

Nov. 22, Women's Allied Drug Club.

Nov. 22, Banquet Credit Men's Association, Milwaukee, Wis.

Nov. 23, Twentieth Century Club, Maywood.

Nov. 25, Morning sermon Peoples Church.

Nov. 25, Glenwood Manual Training School.

Nov. 26, Woman's Club lecture, Peoples Church.

Nov. 29, Sermon, Thanksgiving Day, Peoples Church.

### Funerals

Nov. 1, Mr. Ferdinand Koelle, Interment, Rosehill.

Nov. 3, Mr. James N. Bradley, Interment, Woodlawn.

Nov. 10, Mrs. Anna E. Nelson. Interment, Mt. Olive.

Nov. 13, Mrs. Louise Miller. Interment, Graceland.

Nov. 26, Miss Annie Curtis, Interment, Davenport, Iowa.

Nov. 28, Mrs. Marie Mollar, Interment, Graceland.

### Christening

Nov. 6, Frederick William Kay, son of Mr. and Mrs. Christ D. Kay.

### Weddings

Nov. 3, Charles William Hoerger and Mary Margaret Green.

Nov. 10, Dr. Joseph W. Feazel and Eileen Dygers.

Nov. 10, Adolph Michelis and Evelyn Topp.

Nov. 10, Charles M. Galitz Jr., and Clare A. Snyder.

Nov. 11, Harry Whitver and Hattie Kniffin.

Nov. 17, Leslie I. Lamb and Jean R. Smart.

Nov. 26, John Hobart Gish and Pearl E. Burton.

---

Dr. Bradley announces the following subjects for January:

"A Modern Looks at Religion"

Mornings—10:45 o'clock

Jan. 6, "Courage."

Jan. 13, "Do We Need a New Religion."

Jan. 20, "Religion and Health."

Jan. 27, "Will We Outgrow Religion?"

"Whither Mankind—Sign Posts Along the Way"

Evenings—8 o'clock

Jan. 6, "Where Science Says We Are Going."

Jan. 13, "Where Philosophy Says We Are Going."

Jan. 20, "Where Literature Says We Are Going."

Jan. 27, "Where Religion Says We Are Going."

Morning service broadcast by Station WMAQ.

## MY PRAYER

**Katharine Harrington**

Not from the depths,
But from the surface of Life's sea,
Great God, deliver me!
Not from grim labor, or from weariness,
But from a way of life which I shall confess
To poverty of soul or selfishness,
Set thou me free!

Give me wisdom to know
That want and suffering and pain
Refine and test and temper me;
That they are soundings of Life's sea
Toward depths of utmost harmony
Searching that silence men call God!

Then give me faith
Within these depths of storm and stress
That I may steadfastly profess
Such high integrity of soul
That I can say, in face of grief and pain:
"As I have lived and loved,
So would I live and love, again;
Forever praising Thee!"

## A NEW YEAR'S TROTH

The old year has slipped thru the glass of time, taking with it a portion of my life.

For me a face has faded, a voice is stilled, a chair is empty; precious ambitions lay scattered like broken alabaster boxes, and my sky was oft tarnished by the low-hanging clouds of failure.

But I stand again at the threshold of eternity—the Land of Beginning again—, where the New Year woos with an enchanting hope.

So I plight my troth to the Mystic Comrade by my side, who teaches me to read the meaning of life in the light of its high hours.

In my scars I see the ministry of redemption, and in my slow-healing wounds I read the gospel of Triumphant Life.

Each morn the world wrapped in winsome smiles unfolds, and I know the best is yet to be.

All through the year I shall work and play, sing and pray, dream and hope, suffer and love; for I was as one lonely and have found anew a friend who walketh ever by my side.

And since I have come out of the Silence, and shall return again into the Silence, as a pilgrim of time I will walk with faith the street of years.

—W. Waldemar W. Argow,
Pastor, Peoples Church.
Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

## A CHRISTMAS ROSARY

My creedal rosary has broken, spilling its unfingered beads at my prayer-bent knees.

But in the sanctuary of the Christmas spirit I have found another rosary strung on the silken thread of love.

So I count each bead as I reverently pray:

Teach me that Love was in travail when infant stars were born and virgin suns groaned with maternity.

Unstop my ears that I may hear the love story of wooing atoms, plighting their troth for ever and aye.

Show me that Love hath made big stars my brothers, little flowers my sisters, and vesper-souled birds companions for my soul.

Let me feel a divine enchantment in the celestial symphony of human suffering, with hopes for notes, dreams for bars, unselfish lives as instruments.

Cause me to know that Love and Truth are always born in lowly places, in simple lives, humble minds, and contrite hearts.

Grant me when my little day is done the lingering joy of having lived as an oft-repeated echo of the Christmas story—the Romance of Eternal Love.

—W. Waldemar W. Argow,
Pastor, Peoples Church,
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